



NEWS

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Office of the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs

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TULALIP TRIBES OF WASHINGTON STATE APPROVED FOR 477 PARTICIPATION

WASHINGTON – Interior Associate Deputy Secretary James E. Cason today announced that the Indian Affairs Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development (IEED) has given final approval to the Tulalip Tribes of Washington State to participate in DOI's 477 Program, a comprehensive employment, education, training and welfare program for federally recognized tribes to address economic and workforce needs in their communities. According to the 2000 Census nearly 40 percent of the Native Americans who reside on the Tulalip Reservation live below the federal poverty level.

"We are delighted that the Tulalip Tribes has joined the 477 Program," Cason said. "They, like other tribal 477 Program participants, will be able to streamline the management of their federal workforce, training and welfare funds to better address their employment and economic development needs."

According to the Tribes' 477 Program mission statement, they are seeking "to empower unemployed and underemployed community tribal members; to provide a one stop for support services; job coaching and life skill workshops that will uplift; and bring tribal members to a level of success and get them on the path to self-sufficiency." They plan to incorporate more than \$1.3 million of federal resources from Interior and the Departments of Labor (DOL) and Health and Human Services (DHHS) into a comprehensive employment, training and welfare reform program to help tribal members succeed in the job market, improve each individual's social and economic conditions, increase employment opportunities and prevent future generations from becoming welfare dependent.

The 477 Program, established in 1994 under the Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Act (Public Law 102-477), allows federally recognized tribes to combine funds from up to 12 federal employment, training and welfare reform programs administered by Interior, the lead agency, DOL, DHHS and the Department of Education into a single, tribally operated

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program with a single reporting system. Participating tribes can devote up to 25 percent of their total 477 funding for economic development projects to provide employment opportunities for their members.

In Fiscal Year 2006, the 477 Program serves over 243 federally recognized tribes with a combined funding of approximately \$100 million. Since its inception, the 477 Program has enabled the tribes to use federal funds more effectively to educate and train an estimated 44,000 children, youth and adults.

The program has been highly rated under the Office of Management and Budget's Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) for meeting Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) standards for accountability and efficiency.

The Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development was established to provide high-level support for the Department's goal of serving tribal communities by providing access to energy resources and helping tribes stimulate job creation and economic development. IEED also supports economic development on Indian lands by identifying economic opportunities, assisting in the development of tribal workforce capacity, providing low-cost loans for business development and facilitating partnerships between tribes and the federal or private sector. The Office also supports the President's National Energy Policy by fostering development of domestic energy resources to reduce the nation's dependence on foreign energy sources.

For more information, contact Lynn Forcia, Chief, Division of Workforce Development, Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development, U.S. Department of the Interior, at (202) 219-5270.

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